



\$315,730 Grant Awarded to University of Southern Mississippi ***Homeland Security Funds to be used for law enforcement training***

Hattiesburg, Miss. (June 4, 2012) – A \$315,730 grant has been awarded to the University of Southern Mississippi for law enforcement training. The grant was presented by the Mississippi Office of Homeland Security, on behalf of the Mississippi Department of Public Safety.

The grant will provide training for law enforcement agencies throughout the state. Participants will be instructed on how to handle and diffuse life threatening scenarios such as an active shooter event, where a gunman opens fire in a public place. Currently 6,000 Mississippi law enforcement personnel have already undergone the training.

“Law enforcement personnel must be prepared to protect the public against any situation,” said J.W. Ledbetter, Director of the Mississippi Office of Homeland Security. “Unfortunately, as a nation we are experiencing more shootings in schools, universities and even in public places such as shopping malls and the workplace. During such cases, law personnel have only minutes to assess the situation and take action. By local law enforcement being prepared, we hope to diffuse the scenario with minimal loss.”

Ledbetter said the United States Department of Homeland Security has directed state Homeland Security affiliates to use the funding to enhance existing capabilities within individual states for responding to acts of domestic and international terrorism, use of weapons of mass destruction and biochemical agents.

The grant program is part of a federal plan for ‘All-Hazard’ response planning, beginning at local levels. The aim is to improve response capabilities for catastrophic natural disasters, potential for weapons of mass destruction, acts of terrorism, and chemical/biological/radiological/nuclear/explosive incidents. The initiative also improves local response capabilities for traffic agents, fires and other emergencies.

The Mississippi Office of Homeland Security, a division of the Mississippi Department of Public Safety, seeks to reduce the state’s vulnerability to terrorism and or any disaster that may occur, minimize the damage, and recover from events that do occur.

For more information go to www.homelandsecurity.ms.gov.

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